EU demand to lift quantitative restrictions on 100 items

3884. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO : Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the European Union demanded lifting of all quantitative restrictions imposed by India on 100 products;

(b) if so, the details of the products on which QRs are imposed; and

(c) whether the QRs are in accordance with the provisions of Article 20 and 21 of GATT ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY) : (a) EU had requested consultations with India under the Dispute Settlement Mechanism of the World Trade Organisaton regarding import restrictions maintained by India on more than 100 products.

(b) India maintains import restrictions on certain products for purposes like (i) protecion of public morals; (ii) protecting human, animal, plant life or health; (iii) relating to importation or exportation of gold or silver; (iv) for securing compliance with domestic laws or regulations; (v) for protection of national treasures of artistic, historic or archaeological value; (vi) for conservation of exhaustible natural resources and (vii) for national security, etc.

Details of these products are available in the document 'ITC (HS) Classification of Export and Import Items', which is a part of the EXIM Policy and is available in the Parliament Library.

(c) The Articles XX & XXI of GATT 1994 allow Members to maintain import restrictions on the above grounds.

Export and import

3885. SHRI DWIJENDRA NATH SHARMAH : Will Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) the quantum and value of various items exported and imported by the country during the Ninth Five-Year Plan, year-wise;

(b) the details of foreign exchange earned therefrom during this period;

(c) whether Government have formulated any policy to increase our exports; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY) : (a) and (b) As per the data available from Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence & Statistics (DGCI&S), the volume of exports of principal commodities during Ninth Plan Period in US million dollars is given in statment-I. (*See* below).

(c) and (d) a medium term Export Strategy which is co-terminus with the 10th plan period (2002—07) was announced in January, 2002 with the objective of enhancing India's exports. In line with this strategy, a number of programmes/schemes have been launched which include schemes like Assistance to states for Developing Export Infrastructure (ASIDE), establishing Agri Export Zones, Market Access Initiative, strengthening "Focus LAC" programme, introducing "Focus Africa" programme, etc. In the Exim Policy 2003-04, besides, the focus on Service exports, policies have been devised to strengthen Special Economic Zones (SEZs), 100% Export Oriented Units (EOU's), etc. A new programme called "Focus CIS" has been introduced. Thus measures are being taken from time to time to increase India's exports.

Statement-I

Export of principal commodities during IXth Plan period

(In US $ Million)

Commodities	1997-1998	1998-1999	1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002
1	2	3	4	5	6
I. Plantation	961.24	949.07	742.98	650 90	586.89
II. Agri & Allied Prdts.	4236.56	3997.81	3664.67	3880 15	4044.80
III. Marine Products	1207.26	1038.39	1182.61	1393.76	1213.99
IV. Ores & Minerals	1061.06	893.43	916.12	1152.99	1210.33
V. Leathers & Mfrs.	1656.69	1660.72	1590.22	1944.44	1905 55
VI. Gems & Jewellery	5345.52	5929.35	7502.29	7384.01	7305.71
VII. Sports Goods	80.78	73.23	66.96	64 92	68.15
VIII Chemicals & Related Products	4551.09	4164.81	4912.17	6177.08	6238.66
IX. Engineering Goods	4435.29	3804.83	4386.01	5673.08	5677.50

1		2	3	4	5	6
X.	Electronic Goods	819.24	587.61	726.68	1119.94	1178.97
XI.	Project Goods	81.64	71.48	39.39	25.59	18.18
XII.	Textiles	8504.85	8322.77	9169.34	10693.60	9617.20
XIII.	Handicrafts	525.86	633.11	668.63	861.51	547.91
XIV.	Carpets	545.60	543.54	645.09	581.68	503.37
XV.	Cotton Raw Incl. Waste	221.15	49.18	17.79	48.39	9.17
XVI.	Petroleum Products	352.75	89.43	29.98	1892.43	2125.44
	GRAND TOTAL	35006.00	33219.00	36822.00	44560.00	43827.00

SOURCE: DGCI&S, Kolkata.

Development of New Silk Route

3886. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA : Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether in order to increase trade with Central Asian countries, India, Iran and Afghanistan have agreed to develop a new silk route;

(b) the names of Central Asian countries with which this route will connect India; and

(c) the benefits, apart from trade to India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY) : (a) As part of its global effort, government has taken concrete action to put in place mechanisms to facilitate increased trade, inter alia with Iran, Afghanistan and Central Asian countries. In a meeting held in Tehran on 4-5 January 2003, India, Iran and Afghanistan signed a Memorandum of Understanding on the Development and Construction of Transit and Transport Infrastructure in Chabahar-Milak-Zaranj-Delaram route, aimed at improving access to Afghanistan, and upgrading the infrastructure at Chabahar port and relevant road segments.

(b) Central Asian countries that would be connected with India through this route are Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

(c) The new route is expected to cut distances to Central Asian